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ABSTRACT

To examine the educational backgrounds of public relations practitioners and their relationship to certain key variables in professionalization, a study surveyed a nationwide sample of fulltime public relations practitioners of all ages and from all levels of management in a variety of agencies, companies, and nonprofit organizations. In November 1987, 2,031 questionnaires were sent to randomly selected members of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) and the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC); 650 questionnaires were culled from a larger number and were analyzed for the study. The questionnaire consisted of 47 items examining job satisfaction, alienation from work, public relations roles, James Grunig's four models of public relations, and personal history. Analysis revealed that most respondents did not describe their educations as having been in public relations. However, a trend toward more specialized education in public relations was seen in the fact that of practitioners 29-years-old and under, one-fourth described themselves as having had concentrated education in public relations, and nearly three-fourths had at least one course specifically in it. Finally, the survey indicated few relationships between formal public relations education and certain key variables of professionalism (autonomy, models of public relations practice, and commitment). (Ten tables of data are included, and 22 references are appended.) (MM)

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PUBLIC RELATIONS' QUEST FOR PROFESSIONALISM: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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Abstract

Public relations is trying to gain professional stature by stressing specialized formal education for the field. This study shows that results are mixed, at best. While most practitioners are found to have had formal education in some aspect of communication (such as journalism, mass or interpersonal communication), only a small--though growing--number acknowledge it as being in public relations per se. Furthermore, public relations educations are found to have very little relationship to certain key variables in professionalism.

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Professionalism, and the extent to which public relations may have attained it, have long been hot topics among practitioners. As Cutlip, Center and Broom (1986) have noted, the subject "dominates many conferences and other meetings" and is found in "almost every issue" of periodicals serving the field (p. 72).

That's not surprising, considering what's at stake. Although "professionalism" may seem an amorphous quality, it has significance and specificity for social scientists who study occupations and organizations. Simply put, professionalism is a means by which an occupation gains status, power and influence in society; being a "professional" isn't merely prestigious, it also is highly advantageous (Popple, 1985, p. 563; see also: Blau and Scott, 1962; Cullen, 1978; Haskell, 1984).

As Goode observes, "an industrializing society is a professionalizing society." (1960, p. 902). Many occupations strive for professional status, and more than a few claim it to have achieved it. Among these--according to some practitioners--is public relations; for years the public relations trade press has carried their repeated proclamations that public relations has "arrived." But other practitioners, and many observers, argue that much remains to be done to professionalize the practice.

Theorists of professionalism have generally agreed that the cornerstone of professional power is cognitive exclusivity, meaning the control of a unique body of useful knowledge. In the "natural history" of a profession, scholars such as Caplow and Wilensky have argued, the establishment of university training in the specialization forms one of the earliest stages. (Caplow, 1954; Wilensky, 1964). One of the most important ways that public relations has attempted to professionalize itself is through developing increasingly specialized training, especially through university degree programs.

The first courses in public relations are said to have been

offered in the 1920s, although the real growth in students and programs followed World War II. (Cutlip, Center and Broom, page 50). Since then, both have mushroomed. Between 1975 and 1987, no fewer than three separate commissions published reports and prescriptions for undergraduate or graduate education in public relations. The commissions have all made recommendations for enhancing and formalizing specialized education for public relations. One commission, quoting another, made clear their objectives:

> From the viewpoint of today's practitioner, there are two key stakes in education for public relations. One is future employees. The other is the profession itself. One of the unequivocal hallmarks of every recognized, respected profession is a program for formal education. (The Design for Undergraduate Public Relations Education, 1987)

Even more recently, the Public Relations Society of America Assembly has agreed to expand curricular requirements for a university to establish and maintain a student chapter of the organization.

This paper describes an empirical approach to the question of how professionalized public relations is. It reports data from a new national sampling of public relations practitioners, describes their educational backgrounds, and examines certain correlates relevant to professionalism. Thus, it focuses on the relationship between specialized education in public relations and key attributes of professionalism.

In brief, the research reported in this paper addresses (without claiming to completely answer) two questions crucial to the professionalization of the public relations field:

(1) To what extent do public relations practitioners have public relations educations?

(2) What difference does public relations education make to the professionalism of practitioners?

THE CONCEPT OF PROFESSIONALISM

The modern study of professions can be traced back at least as far as Weber. Although he is better known for his classical analysis of bureaucracy, Weber regarded professionalism--like bureaucracy--as one of the major efforts of Western rationalism to bring logical order to arenas of social decisionmaking. To Weber, professionalism represented one set of means by which actors, individual and collective, obtain predictive and manipulative control over their environments (Cullen, p. 3).

In Weber's schema, it was an alternative to bureaucratic structure.

The inherent elusiveness and imprecision of the concept probably means that "the search for a `true' definition of a profession is fruitless," as Popple points out (p. 563). Nevertheless, scholars agree that the concept is an important and useful one.
In recent years it has been widely agreed that professionalization is a process and that the concept of "professionalization" is best viewed, not as a dichotomous one but rather as something existing on a continuum (Popple, p. 562). Furthermore, certain elements from various models of professionalism have achieved wide acceptance. Among the most important of these are the following:

(1) Cognitive exclusivity, which has long been viewed as a hallmark of professional status. Members of a profession are seen as having exclusive access to a unique body of knowledge; in modern society, this knowledge is most commonly conveyed through specialized university training. The more complex, restricted and esoteric the education, it is thought, the more likely it leads to professional status.

(2) Autonomy is said to be another hallmark of professionals. Bureaucratic workers are controlled by superiors; professionals by internalized self-controls and by professional peers. Thus, says Freidson, a profession is "an occupation which has assumed a dominant position in a division of labor, so that it gains control over the determination of the substance of its own work." (1970, p. xvii).

(3) Task Composition defines the work unique to a specific profession. For a profession to have control over a certain domain in the field of occupations, it must delineate its "range, authority, and boundaries" (Eisikovits, et al, p. 128). Thus, such criteria as specificity and complexity of the task must be met.

(4) Commitment, a concept related to Gouldner's concept of cosmopolitans and locals, describes the orientation and intentions of actors in a variety of ways. Lachman and Aranya have pointed out that the value systems of professionals and bureaucrats differ; the former ordinarily demonstrate more loyalty to their profession, the latter to their employer.

These are not the only factors involved in the concept of professionalism, but they are the ones which will be examined in this study.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

The research reported here is an examination of (1) the educational backgrounds of public relations practitioners and (2) their relationship to certain key variables in professionalization. Thus, the study measures the extent to which practitioners report having received specialized education, and compares this with measures of autonomy, task composition, and commitment.

After measuring the extent of specialized training in public relations among a national sample of practitioners, this study tested the following hypotheses, derived from observation of the literature of both public relations and professionalization:

H1 As newcomers enter public relations, the likelihood increases that they will have specialized training in public relations.

This hypothesis tests the claims of public relations practitioners that their field is gaining "cognitive exclusivity."

H2 Practitioners with specialized training in public relations and practitioners with less specialized training will report differential levels of professional autonomy.

Autonomy is a core concept in professionalism. Theory suggests that when cognitive exclusivity rises in an occupation, members' concern for their autonomy should also. This concern by members can manifest itself either in their perceptions of higher autonomy levels or in heightened dissatisfaction with autonomy levels; in any case, it is reasonable to expect that more highly professionalized individuals will differentiate themselves from less professionalized individuals on these measures.

H3 Practitioners with specialized training in public relations will prefer different models (i.e., task compositions) of public relations practice than do practitioners with less specialized training.

It has been noted that emerging professions experience conflict between professionalizing newcomers and less

professionalized oldtimers; part of the conflict stems from differing definitions or models of occupational practice. The professionally conscious newcomers recognize, as Eisikovits puts it, that "a major distinctive feature of a professional group is that it deals with a unique range and composition of tasks that no other profession handles or has the authority to handle...." (p. 128); thus newcomers' hunger for an occupational identity which will serve their ambitions more effectively than that of the oldtimers.

H4 Practitioners with specialized training in public relations will demonstrate higher levels of commitment (that is, less intention to turnover and more satisfaction) to the field than will practitioners with less specialized training.

Professionalization theory holds that the value systems of professionals and bureaucrats differ in a number of ways; commitment is one of these ways. In this paper, we will be concerned particularly with Lachman and Aryana's sense of commitment to the profession as demonstrated both by "intention to turnover" and willingness to repeat job or career.

METHODOLOGY

Sample: There are several obstacles to sampling the universe of public relations practitioners, stemming from the lack of a single, widely accepted definition of public relations. Depending on the definitions used, for example, estimates of the number of practitioners range from the vicinity of 100,000 to over 400,000. However one defines it, public relations overlaps and intersects with other endeavors, and distinguishing which is which can be difficult. Public relations practitioners have many different skills and perform a wide variety of tasks, ranging from counseling top management on corporate strategy to arranging bulletin board displays. At the same time, they work under a variety of job titles and labels--such as "public affairs" or "corporate relations"--and frequently are submerged in other departments, such as personnel or fundraising. And because of the opprobrium with which public relations is sometimes greeted, some personnel who might otherwise regard themselves as public relations practitioners develop other self-images instead.

Nevertheless, it is possible to find accessible populations of persons likely to describe themselves as public relations practitioners by tapping the membership rolls of the two largest associations in the field: the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), and the International Association of

Business Communicators (IABC). PRSA listed about 12,100 members in its 1987-88 Register; IABC about 12,400 in its 1987 WorldBook. It was decided to sample the memberships of both organizations, because of the possibility they would complement each other, improving representativeness of the universe. Conventional wisdom holds that IABC members are more likely to be younger, female, and lower in the management hierarchy than members of PRSA.

After a random start, every 12th name was drawn from the PRSA and IABC national directories. A total of 2,031 questionnaires were successfully delivered by mail in early November 1987. By December 22, the researchers had received 746 replies, for a 36.8% response rate on one mailing, with no followups. This number was then reduced to 650 qualified respondents (32% of the original mailing) by culling out incomplete replies, as well as part-timers or retirees, professors, and anyone who omitted or replied negatively to this screening question: "Do you consider yourself to be employed in some aspect of public relations work?"

Thus, our working sample of 650 is composed exclusively of PRSA or IABC members who describe themselves as fulltime public relations practitioners. This nationwide sample includes practitioners of all ages and from all levels of management, employed in a wide variety of agencies, companies and nonprofit organizations. However, no claim is made for representativeness of the larger universe of public relations practitioners; indeed, from their own observations in the field, the authors' opinion is that members of this sample are older and more likely to be managers than practitioners in general. Furthermore, professionalization theory suggests that members of professional associations are more likely to be professionally oriented and socialized than non-members. Data reported here should be viewed in that light.

Instrument: Each respondent received a covering letter, a four-page questionnaire, and a postpaid reply envelope.

The covering letter was addressed, "Dear Professional Communicator" and explained that the researchers were interested in measuring job satisfaction [which will, in fact, be reported in another paper]. The questionnaire consisted of 47 items drawn from, or inspired by, these sources:

(1) The Quality of Employment Survey (QES) conducted in 1977 by the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research;

(2) Pearlin's measure of alienation from work (Price, 1972);

(3) Broom, Smith and Dozier's research on public relations roles, particularly as used in work by Judd (1987);

(4) Grunig's four models of public relations (Grunig and Hunt).

A variety of demographic and personal history questions were also asked. Resulting data were analyzed on microcomputers using the Statpac analysis package.

RESULTS

Summary statistics for the 650 qualified fulltime practitioners indicate that they were more likely to be female than male (58.4% vs. 41.6%; 0.2% did not answer), approaching middle age (median age: 37), well-educated (only 4.6% lacked a college degree), and loyal employees experienced in their field: respondents had worked an average of 6.8 years for their present employer and 11.9 years in the public relations field.

Respondents were also somewhat more likely to view themselves as in the managerial role than the technician role. Of the 650, 54.2% saw themselves as "someone who facilitates communication and is involved in planning, policy and problem solving," while 41.1% described themselves as "someone who mainly handles the production (i.e., writing, creating, processing, etc.) of messages and communication activities." The remaining 4.8% did not answer the question. (The question was based on Judd's version of Wilcox et al's measures of occupational role in public relations.)

Of the sample, 52.6% were members of PRSA, 46% of IABC (affiliations of a handful of the respondents could not be determined). Confirming conventional wisdom, several key characteristics of PRSA and IABC members showed statistically significant differences. The median age of PRSA members was higher than that of IABC members: 40 vs. 35. Of PRSA members in the sample, 51.6% were male; of IABC members, 30.1%. Furthermore, 63.1% of PRSA members viewed themselves as managers, while 50% of IABC members did so.

Education. Respondents showed high levels of formal education: 94.5% of our 650 respondents had at least a bachelor's degree; 26.8% reported a master's degree, while 25.2% reported some graduate work short of a degree (and 1.1% of practitioners reported having the Ph.D.).

The issue here, however, is the degree to which this education represents specialized preparation for public relations. To measure this, respondents were presented with open-ended

questions asking college graduates to name their educational specializations on three levels: their major (or majors); their minor (or minors); and their field of graduate study, if any. Respondents were also asked to indicate whether they "[had]...ever completed at least one course that was specifically about public relations."

Only 9.4% of the 650 practitioners in the sample claimed a public relations major by name, whether alone or in combination with another major; only 2.4% described public relations as their minor, whether alone or combination with another subject; only 5.7% reported graduate study primarily in public relations. Furthermore, when asked if they had ever "completed at least one course that was specifically about public relations," 49.4 % of our sample said they never had, 48.6% said they had, and 2% did not answer.

Even when those reporting majors, minors or graduate study in public relations are aggregated (and overlapping between them eliminated), only 14.8% of respondents describe themselves as having had concentrated professional study in public relations on any level.

For purposes of this study, "concentrated professional study in public relations"--or "professionally educated," for convenience--is defined as a reported major, minor, or graduate study in public relations that included at least one course specifically about public relations. Most self-described public relations majors have taken at least one such course, but a handful have not and were excluded.

(The authors understand that education for public relations is found under many labels in American higher education. Nevertheless, they argue that labeling itself is an indicator of progress in formalizing public relations education; when students and universities choose to describe their majors specifically as "public relations," they are ipso facto reporting a more advanced stage in the natural history of professionalization than when they choose other names...particularly broader, less differentiated terms such as "mass communication" or "journalism," which are shared with a number of other occupations. To the extent that universities and students are specific in their naming and labeling, as opposed to diffuse, they are saying something significant about the state of affairs in the educational program itself. Do physicians ever describe their educations as being in anything other than "medicine" or a subspecialty thereof?)

If most practitioners do not describe their majors as public relations, what were the majors of choice?

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Table 1 about here

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Journalism claimed the most majors (28.9%); English the second largest single major (16.9%); all other varieties of communication majors (mass, interpersonal, speech, or just plain "communication") grouped together the third largest (14.5%); and business, fourth (5.4%). All other majors together accounted for 19.4%.

Only 71.2% of respondents reported they had completed a minor or minors of any description. Table 2 shows that the college minors of public relations practitioners comprised a far more heterogeneous mix than majors. English was the most favored single minor (12.5% of the entire sample), followed by business (10%), all other forms of communication (7.4%), and journalism (4.8%). All other areas of study--from art to zoology--accounted for 34.9% of the sample.

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Table 2 about here

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Table 3 illustrates preferences in graduate study, whether or not a graduate degree was completed, were far less diverse. The most favored area of study was business (experienced by 12.9% of the 650-member total sample), followed by all other forms of communication (9.8%), public relations (5.7%), and journalism (4.6%). All other areas of study accounted for 11.5% of the total sample.

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Table 3 about here

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Further examination of these figures reveals something notable about the formal education of the sample members. Earlier, it was pointed out that only 14.8% of the 650 sample members chose to describe themselves as having concentrated educations in public relations. As small as proportion of professionally educated practitioners may seem, however, the proportion of sample members who have had neither a major, minor, nor graduate study in some form of communication, is even smaller: 64, or 9.8% of the sample. What that means is that, in

addition to those with concentrated educations in public relations, 460 members of the sample, or 70.8%, have had educations at some level, in some area of communication: journalism, interpersonal, mass, or whatever. If they did not get such educations as majors, they did as minors, or as graduate students. In addition, some practitioners have had taken formal courses in public relations while having no other concentrated study in the area.

Thus, only 96 public relations practitioners (labeled hereafter as "Professionally Educated") describe their educations as being specifically in public relations, but even fewer (64, referred to hereafter as "Not Professionally Educated") have not had significant educational experience somewhere in the broader area of communication studies. Even this may be changing, however: the younger they are, the more likely practitioners are to report that they have public relations educations. Thus:

* While only 9.4% of all practitioners in the sample described their undergraduate major as public relations, 27.1% of practitioners age 29 and under did so, compared with 5.5% of those 30 and over.

* Similarly, while only 14.8% of all practitioners in the sample could be described as having had "concentrated public relations study" (that is, major, minor or graduate work which they specifically labeled as public relations), 34.6% of all sample members age 29 and under could, compared with only 9.5% of those 30 and above.

* And while only 48.6% of all public relations practitioners in the sample have taken at least one course specifically about public relations, 70.7% of those 29 and under have, compared to 43.4% of those 30 and older.

CORRELATES OF EDUCATION

Autonomy: Because autonomy--meaning freedom to make decisions in the workplace--is a valued outcome of professional status, it is logical to assume that persons with formal educations in a professional field will have differing perceptions of their autonomy than practitioners without such educations. This survey measured perceived autonomy and perceived alienation (i.e., lack of autonomy) in two ways.

First, respondents were given three items derived from the University of Michigan QES questionnaire, and asked to indicate their positions for each on a four-point scale, ranging from

"Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree." The items were:

4. I have a lot to say about what happens on my job.

11. It is basically my own responsibility to decide how my job gets done.

13. I have the freedom to decide what I do on my job.

Second, the subjective alienation experienced by the respondents was measured by means of items derived from the Pearlin Alienation Index. The Pearlin index employs four items which ask the respondent (1) "how often you do things in your work you wouldn't otherwise do;" (2) if it is true that "it's who you know that counts;" (3) "how much say or influence do you have on the way your organization is run," and (4) "how often do you tell your superior your own ideas about things you might do in your work" (Price 1972).

To explore the relationship between formal education in public relations and perceptions of autonomy, it was decided to compare performance on these measures by the "Professionally Educated" (N=96) and the "Not Professionally Educated" (N=64). (As explained earlier, the Professionally Educated are those practitioners who describe their majors, minors or graduate study as having specifically been in public relations. The Not Professionally Educated practitioners have had no concentrated educations either in public relations or any other form of communication. Among our sample of 650 practitioners, their educational backgrounds therefore are the most nearly polar opposite to the Professionally Educated.)

Responses to the QES items are displayed in Table 4; those to the Pearlin items in Tables 5 and 6.

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Table 4 about here

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When t-tests were computed on the three QES items, the respondents with formal public relations educations and those with none were found to have no differences statistically significant at the .05 level.

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Table 5 about here

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Likewise, when t-tests and a chi-square were computed for the four individual Pearlin items, no differences significant at the .05 level appeared.

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Table 6 about here

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Apparently those who have formal public relations educations and those who do not do not differ significantly in their perceptions of their autonomy on the job or in their alienation from power.

Models of Public Relations: Grunig and Hunt have described four models of public relations practice which they believe "have evolved through history" and which collectively serve as a typology of modern practices. These four models are: (1) the Press Agentry/Publicity model, the purpose of which is propaganda; (2) the Public Information model, the purpose of which is dissemination of information; (3) the Two-Way Assymmetric model, the purpose of which is scientific persuasion, and (4) the "Two-Way Symmetric," the purpose of which is mutual understanding.

Our survey asked respondents to indicate which one of the four models was "your PERSONAL definition of public relations" and then to indicate which one of the four "describes the real goal of your management's public relations practices."

We could detect no significant difference between respondents with formal education in public relations and those with none, either in the models personally preferred or in the models attributed to management.

Table 7 indicates that both kinds of practitioners overwhelmingly prefer the Two-Way Symmetrical model of public relations practice, with the Public Information model a distant second choice, Press Agentry/Publicity third, and Persuasion fourth.

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Table 7 about here

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Likewise, Table 8 indicates that practitioners with both kinds

of educational backgrounds perceive their management's goals as being almost as likely to favor any one of the four models as any other: Press Agentry/Publicity and Two-Way Symmetrical were each chosen by about 30% of the respondents; Public Information and Two-Way Assymetric by about 20%.

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Table 8 about here

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Commitment: "Commitment" used here means the extent to which a worker does not express intention to turnover but does indicate overall satisfaction, as indicated by willingness to enter the same career. The commitment of members of our survey were measured in two ways: first, through intent to turnover in their careers, by changing employers or careers; second, through willingness to enter the same job and the same career "if you had to decide all over again." Because professionals are generally regarded as being more highly committed to their professions than non-professionals, it could be assumed that persons with formal education in public relations would display more commitment to career and less to their jobs than persons without formal education in public relations.

In fact, on three of four measures of commitment, sample members with formal educations in public relations and those without displayed no statistically significant differences, according to t-test, than those without such educations. Neither group was more likely than the other to predict they would be in the same job or career "five years from now."

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Table 9 about here

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Likewise, the two groups did not express significant differences, by t-test, on willingness to enter the same jobs "knowing what you know now, if you had to decide all over again." However, those with formal public relations educations were more likely than those without to enter the same career again ($p < .01$).

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Table 10 about here

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To investigate possible relationships with other variables, the correlation of age and willingness to enter the same career again was measured among members of the larger sample. However, the Pearson r was found to be only -0.047. Likewise, gender and willingness to enter the same career again are found to be unrelated (chi square = 4.327, p = 0.115).

CONCLUSIONS

Most of the 650 public relations practitioners in our sample do not describe their educations as having been in public relations. Half have not even taken a single course specifically about the subject. But most also have had some specialized formal education at some point in one variety or another of communication--an umbrella term including not only public relations, but journalism, mass communication, interpersonal or speech communication, or just plain "communication." The umbrella of "communication" is a broad one, encompassing a number of occupational areas. A diversity of educational backgrounds under the broad heading of communication have served as gateways to public relations practice. Thus, the "cognitive exclusivity" that is a hallmark of professional status exists for public relations only in a relative sense, and does so weakly.

However, a trend toward more specialized education in public relations may be seen in the fact that of practitioners 29 and under, fully one fourth describe themselves as having had concentrated education in public relations, and nearly three - fourths have had at least one course specifically about it. The hypothesis that formal education in public relations is increasingly a characteristic of newcomers to public relations appears to be supported.

For those arguing over just how professionalized public relations is, therefore, this survey offers good news and bad news. The good news lies in the fact that very few PR practitioners work without having had some formal study in communication of one kind or anotner, and there is even a small but growing trend toward study in public relations per se. The bad news is that public relations can apparently be practiced successfully by most practitioners without further specialization--specialization that would set one apart from journalists, broadcasters, and others who work in the broad

field labeled "communication."

Finally, there is the question--expressed in various ways in hypothesis 2, 3 and 4--of just what relationships exist between formal education in public relations and certain correlates of professional status: autonomy, models of public relations practice, and commitment. Our survey indicates there are almost none: perceptions of autonomy in the workplace, preferred models of public relations practice, and--with one exception--commitment to job and career do not differ among practitioners claiming formal education in public relations and those who do not. The one exception: those with PR educations are slightly more likely than those without to say, given the chance, they'd choose a public relations career again. Accordingly, hypotheses that education is related to perceived autonomy and to preferred models of PR cannot be supported; the relationship between education and commitment is only partially supported.

To what extent do public relations practitioners claim to have educations in public relations? Not very much, although the extent is growing. To what extent are such educations related to perceived differences in autonomy, public relations practice, and commitment? Very little.

Very clearly, public relations is professionalizing itself, but is in the early stages of doing so. Public relations is not a mature profession, although it is headed in that direction. It also has a long way to go.

Table 1

UNDERGRADUATE MAJORS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTITIONERS

	N	Pct.
Public Relations	61	9.4
Journalism	188	28.9
All Other Communications	94	14.5
Business	35	5.4
English	110	16.9
All Other Majors	126	19.4
Did Not Graduate	30	4.6
No Answer	6	0.9
TOTALS	650	100.0

NOTE: Dual majors were assigned to categories according to the hierarchy shown in the table. Thus, someone claiming a "dual major in public relations and journalism" was counted as a public relations major, not as a journalism major; a "journalism and business" major was counted as a journalism major, and so on.

Table 2

UNDERGRADUATE MINORS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTITIONERS

	N	Pct.
Public Relations	11	1.7
Journalism	31	4.8
All Other Communications	48	7.4
Business	65	10.0
English	81	12.5
All Other Minors	227	34.9
Did Not Graduate	30	4.6
No Answer	157	24.1
TOTALS	650	100.0

NOTE: Multiple minors were assigned to categories according to the hierarchy shown in the table. Thus, someone claiming a "dual minor in public relations and business" was counted as a public relations minor, not as a business minor; a "journalism and English" minor was counted as a journalism minor, and so on.

Table 3

GRADUATE FIELDS OF STUDY OF PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTITIONERS

	N	Pct.
Public Relations	37	5.7
Journalism	30	4.6
All Other Communications	64	9.8
Business	84	12.9
English	31	4.8
All Other Fields	75	11.5
Did Not Attend	312	48.0
No Answer	17	2.6
TOTALS	650	99.9*

* (Does not equal 100.0% because of rounding.)

NOTE: Dual fields were assigned to categories according to the hierarchy shown in the table. Thus, someone claiming fields in both public relations and journalism was counted as a public relations student, not as a journalism student; a "journalism and business" student was counted as a journalism student, and so on.

Table 4

TASK AUTONOMY REPORTED BY PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTITIONERS, ACCORDING TO EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Group 1 = Professionally Educated (n=96)
Group 2 = Not Professionally Educated (n=64)

Item	Mean Group 1	Mean Group 2	Probability of t
4. I have a lot to say about what happens on my job.	3.08	3.03	*
11. It is basically my own responsibility to decide how my job gets done.	3.27	3.17	*
13. I have the freedom to decide what I do on my job.	2.95	2.98	*

* Not significant

(Items were scored as follows: Strongly agree = 4; Agree = 3; Disagree = 2; Strongly disagree = 1.)

Table 5

TASK AUTONOMY REPORTED BY PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTITIONERS, ACCORDING TO EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Group 1 = Professionally Educated (n=96)
Group 2 = Not Professionally Educated (n=64)

Item	Mean Group 1	Mean Group 2	Probability of t
25. How often do you do things in your work that you otherwise wouldn't do if it were up to you?	2.18	2.32	*
27. How much say or influence do you have on the way your organization is run?	2.46	2.30	*
28. How often do you tell your superior your own ideas about things you might do in your work?	3.20	3.11	*

* Not significant

Items were scored as follows:

--Item 25: Never = 1; Once in a while = 2; Fairly often = 3; Very often = 4.

--Item 27: A lot = 1; Some = 2; Very little = 3; None = 4.

--Item 28: Very often = 1; Fairly often = 2; Once in a while = 3; Never = 4.

Table 6

JOB ALIENATION REPORTED BY PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACRTITIONERS, ACCORDING TC EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Group 1: Professionally Education (n=96)
Group 2: Not Professionally Educated (n=64)

Item 26: In your organization, it's not important how much you know; it's who you know that really counts.

	Group 1		Group 2	
	n	%	n	%
Agree	27	54.0	23	46.0
Disagree	62	60.8	40	39.2

Missing cases = 8

Corrected chi square = .387; probability of chance = 0.534

Table 7

MODELS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS PREFERRED,
ACCORDING TO EDUCATIONAL TYPE

Group 1 = Professionally Educated (n=96)
Group 2 = Not Professionally Educated (n=64)

	Group 1		Group 2	
	n	%	n	%
Publicity	10	10.5	5	7.9
Dissemination	14	14.7	16	25.4
Persuasion	0	0.0	2	3.2
Mutual Understanding	71	74.7	40	63.5
TOTALS	95	99.9*	63	100.0

* Does not equal 100.0%, due to rounding.

Missing cases = 2

Chi square = 6.232; probability of chance = 0.101

Table 8

MODELS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS ATTRIBUTED TO MANAGEMENT, ACCORDING TO EDUCATIONAL TYPE

Group 1 = Professionally Educated (n=96)
Group 2 = Not Professionally Educated (n=64)

	Group 1		Group 2	
	n	%	n	%
Publicity	29	30.9	19	30.2
Dissemination	20	21.3	9	14.3
Persuasion	21	22.3	12	19.0
Mutual Understanding	24	25.5	23	36.5
TOTALS	94	100.0	63	100.0

Missing cases = 3

Chi square = 2.716; probability of chance = 0.437

Table 9

JOB AND CAREER COMMITMENT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTITIONERS, ACCORDING TO EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Group 1 = Professionally Educated (n=96)
Group 2 = Not Professionally Educated (n=64)

Item	Mean Group 1	Mean Group 2	Probability of t
31. Five years from now, how likely is it that you will be working for the same employer?	2.28	2.45	*
33. Five years from now, how likely is it you will be working in some aspect of the same career?	3.67	3.52	*

* Not significant

(Items were scored as follows: Very likely = 4; Somewhat likely = 3; Somewhat unlikely = 2; Very unlikely = 1.)

Table 10

WILLINGNESS TO REPEAT JOB AND CAREER,
ACCORDING TO EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Group 1 = Professionally Educated (n=96)
Group 2 = Not Professionally Educated (n=64)

Item	Mean Group 1	Mean Group 2	Probability of t
35. Knowing what you know now, if you had to decide all over again whether to take the same JOB you now have, what would you decide?	2.66	2.58	*
36. Knowing what you know now, if you had to decide all over again whether to enter the same CAREER you are in now, what would you decide?	2.72	2.47	$p < .01$

* Not significant

(Items were scored as follows: I'd decide without hesitation to enter the same job/career = 3; I'd have some second thoughts = 2; I'd decide definitely NOT to enter the same job/career = 1)

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